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Title: Regarding providing tax exemptions to Cardamom, rubber and coconut growers.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Thank you Madam Speaker. I would like to raise a very serious issue with regard to the economy of the Keralites.

Madam, Kerala economy has a strong base in the agriculture sector, the plantation sector, the traditional sector and also the NRIs. As we all know well the NRIs are returning just because of the crisis there. We know that the traditional industries are also in a difficult position. We have discussed the agricultural sector earlier.

We have to speak out about the plantation sector where I have been involved. The Kerala MPs have been discussing the rubber issue because the prices have gone down.

With regard to cardamom, the prices have come down from Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 500. Kerala is known as the land of coconuts but the farmers are not ready to harvest coconuts because the prices have gone to such an extent. So, in such a situation, I would request the Government and also the concerned Minister at least to treat these issues as agricultural issues. There can be even some tax exemptions. Otherwise, it would be very difficult for the growers of cardamom, rubber and coconut to survive.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri M.B. Rajesh and Adv. Joice George is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri P. Karunakaran.